

February 16, 2021

Testimony on HB 955
Election Law – Absentee Ballot Delivery and Marking
Ways and Means

Position: Favorable

Common Cause Maryland supports HB 955 which would reduce the risks associated with the online delivery of mail-in ballots while preserving the right to request that method of delivery for voters needing it the most.

Maryland is unique in allowing any eligible voter to receive a mail-in ballot over electronically. To request a ballot be delivered over the internet, voters may fill out a paper form with just their name, address, and birthdate. When using a computer to request a ballot, voters must use additional credentials such as last 4 digits of the social security number, driver's license number and driver's license date of issue.

This method of delivery provides critical access to voting to overseas and disabled voters. It also ensures those unable to receive their ballots by mail for numerous reasons are still able to participate in our elections. While maintaining this level of access and convenience of electoral participation by Marylanders remains a priority, the security of our elections is critical, and this legislation manages to balance both priorities.

HB 955 would restrict the electronic delivery of mail-in ballots, as most states do, to voters who need to receive their ballots this way: military and overseas voters, voters with disabilities that prevent them from marking a paper ballot independently and privately, and voters for whom there would be no other way to receive their ballots in time to submit them before the deadline.

Maryland has taken an important step in securing and maintaining the integrity of our elections. HB 955 build on those efforts as mail-in voting grows more popular throughout the state.

We urge a favorable report.